

WASHINGTON, D.C. - More than 1 million eligible veterans have received a 46 percent bump in mileage reimbursement for travel to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities.

The mileage reimbursement rate has increased from 28.5 to 41.5 cents per mile. This follows a rate increase from 11 to 28.5 cents in January 2008. Both increases were the result of historic VA funding increases passed by the Democratic-led 110th Congress in 2007 and 2008.

"With the nearest VA facility in Palo Alto, some of our veterans face roundtrips of more than 200 miles, an expense many can't afford," said Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel), who sits on the Veterans Affairs subcommittee that approved the funding increase. "We need to make sure that our veterans aren't choosing between health care and other necessities. I will continue to use my position on the Appropriations Committee to make sure our veterans receive the benefits they deserve."

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced that the latest travel reimbursement increase went into effect November 17.

"Before this year, travel reimbursements were frozen at 11 cents per mile and had not increased since 1979 when gas was 95 cents a gallon," said Congressman Chet Edwards, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. "This might not seem like a lot of money to a lot of people, but to rural veterans, it could be the difference between getting health care and going without."

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